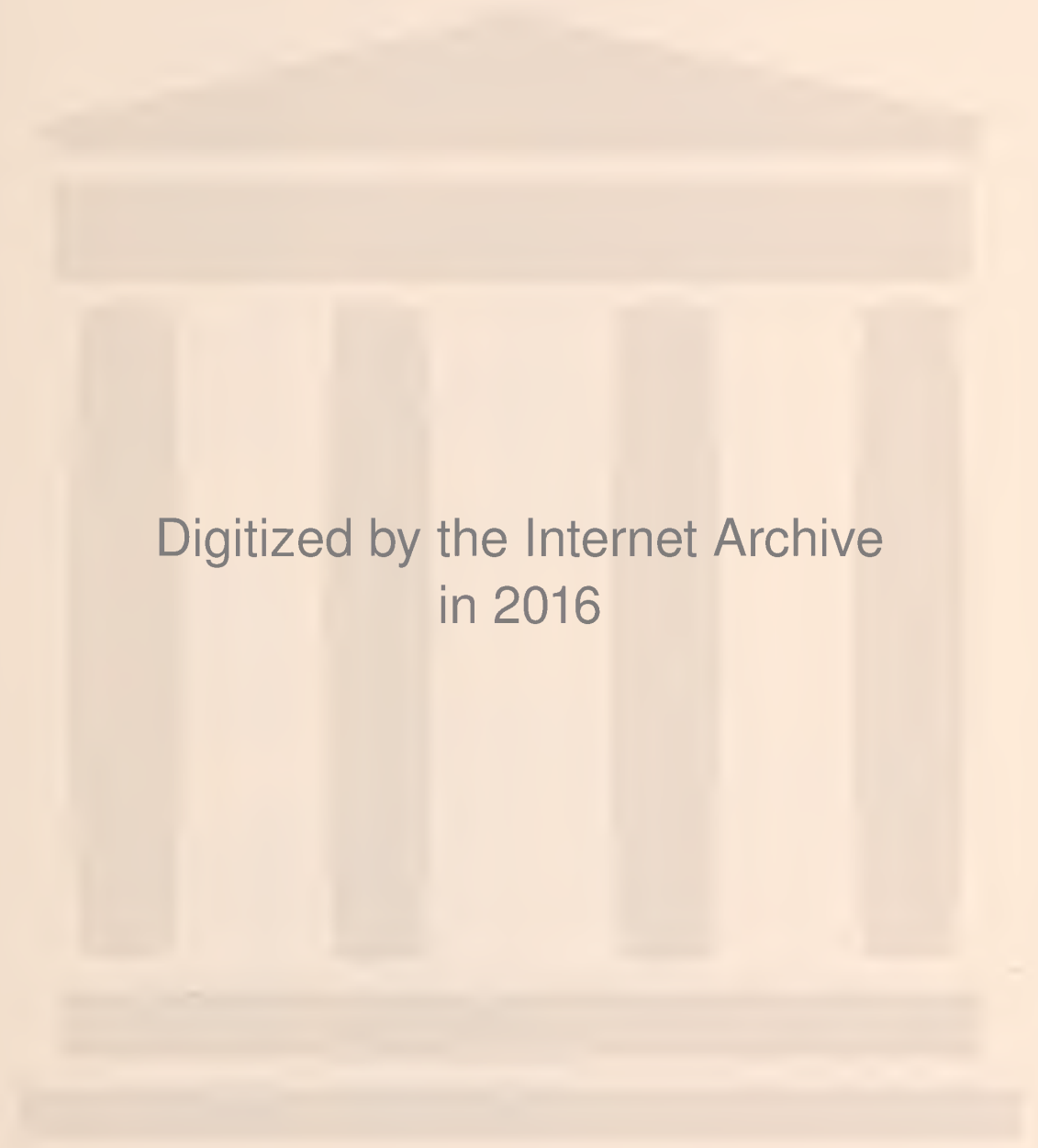
Calvert



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NOTES:

--Todor Čalovski was born in 1946 in Calecnik, Macedonia (Yugoslavia). The translations of his poems will be published in Fall 1976 in Reading the Ashes: An Anthology of the Poetry of Modern Macedonia, edited by Milne Holton and Graham W. Reid.

--Gary Gestson's lithograph was originally executed in several colors. Unfortunately, we are unable to reproduce them in the pages of the CALVERT.

Thanks to Joyce Kornblatt, Eddie Gold, McKenna Odeman, Cherri Senders, the Production Shop Staff, and the English Undergraduate Association for their help with this issue of the CALVERT.

So it didn't matter to him he thought
but he found out differently of course-
when his age approached him his memory caught
on to what he had done & tuned to remorse-
he played his tape over & over pal.
Whyfore, then, should you muddle in his song
all bleak-like: should you bebop his chorale
& restring his instrument? Is it wrong
to be other than yourself, & what's that?
Are you all you are collected up to be?
If so, then you can put on your top hat,
twirl your cane, & sing we shall be free,
only he isn't: bound to his backward beat
he humms himself sour instead of sweet.

Joe Brennan

THE APE LIVES IN ALL OF US

The ape lives
in all of us.
He is impatient
to be acknowledged.

Lately,
as never before,
I hear hoarse grunts
deep within my chest
sounding his presence.
No longer can I ignore
the peculiar sensation
of someone
or something
climbing up the ribcage
into my throat,
hand
over hand.
No matter how hard I swallow
the ape continues his climb
the pressure continues to build
towards an explosion.
He will not be denied.

The ape lives
in all of us.
He is impatient
to be acknowledged.

Tonight,
for the first time,
I notice the hair
on the back of my hands
growing thicker.
Unable to manipulate
typewriter keys,
I bang
the machine
with clenched fists,
RAGE against my predicament.
Little remains
but to shave regularly
on the hour
and cover mirrors
avoid the reflection of a face
whose true nature cannot be denied.

The ape lives
in all of us.
He is impatient
to be acknowledged.

Charles Russell Spicer

The Poem about Loss

What line is it? Line 1.
Soon to be line 2.
Space slips away,
you refuse to revise it.
Line 5 glosses over
a gathering fear.
You send the carriage away
and bump it back, bring you to
line 8, which can only barely
begin to ask,
what line is it?
Line 12.

Leaves begin to flutter down
on stanza 2, sugar maple,
like yellow spreading in your sight
before you faint.
You wake up on the ground,
having lost two minutes of your life.
Your friends hover over you.
You drink water from a paper cup,
realizing it is already line 21,
and you have just barely begun,
you haven't the strength
to write the poem about loss.

It is useless to begin again,
but you do.
You wish to prove to yourself
that at least you can endure
this empty space.
You welcome the end,
finally rushing up at you
until it hits: the one thing
you have let yourself learn
about the poem about loss
is its color
and already it's the last line.

Edward Gold

TAKING OUT YOUR RUBBISH

The shoes you gave me
are battered through,
they rock, leak, and sink,
today they go.
Your odors have cleared
from my room like smoke
but the window stays open,
I need the air.
You're gone a year.
Love letters are clippings
on a war that never was,
the egg shells also
hoot to be dumped.

But our plants still grow
mostly, the ferns are lush
and philodendron is giddy.
Only your gardenia has sallowed,
it wailed a dirge last night
and lay from its pot today
with buds shut, limbs folded out
for the shuffled journey.

James Maher

Frankfurt

Early August
this city blurs in heat.
Smooth, white bottles of milk
stand souring on doorsteps
in the afternoon sun.
Tall pines hunch,
sagging in circles
on ancient health resort hills
that no longer heal.

Greasing my thighs
at the public swimming pool.
The grass is thick
with Germans lunching,
erect on coarse blankets,
pink flesh spilling over
damp suits.
Women bloom in circles,
children sprouting
from their arms
clutch the oil-soaked skins
then slip to the ground.
White sun
sours an old Hausfrau's face
as she reclines
into it.

Marianne Glass

My skin ripples
over my ribs
like waves of beach
in a wind.

Bound on a skinny
finger of sand
between the sound and the sea,

unbroken maw of sea and sky,
blue as blood

and fire calls
across the sound.

Suzanne Marie Hobbs

Gone fishing

The night the possum came
to die,
my body lay
two sheets to the moon,
all white arm and web,

but I had made a hook
of mouse bones,
gone fishing
in the wood that flows
by my river to the night,

caught nothing
but an elephant's breath,
and the possum at my yard,
his long throat black
as the rasp of tearing leaves.

I knew then
the hard part
is getting in,
and we looked down
each other's dark,

the only white
the hook of bones
and the possum's teeth.

Suzanne Marie Hobbs

Exodus

Asleep
in her castle
by the sea,

her dreams
be hieroglyphs
of birds,

white flap
of the waves
at her feet,

at her throat
an alexandrite
red as the eye of god

and on her wrist
the silver chains
blue as the slave it bound.

Suzanne Marie Hobbs

The Barefoot Princess at Antietam

When the voices
blow cold
as the leaves,

and the roots
burrow into the hills,

and hands
that have held me
go down like the sun
and the drums of my fathers to rust
on South Mountain,

by the moon
of Poor Richard
I will come to husk.

In the fall
of the Cornfield
I will sleep,

turn on bullets
through the dark
layers of ticking,
lie black and blue

naked in Sunken Lane,
feel it run
to blood again,

and the still waters of tongues
shall wake me all over to mourning.

Suzanne Marie Hobbs

Wind Candy

The facts at first
fit stiff and hard
rubbing blisters
like a steel brace;

I shuffled and hobbled
down off my merrry-go-round;

in the bumping-cars
I bruised easily as an apple.

The weight of a tune or an hour
pressed out tears.

I ran screaming from the fun-house.

Then the carnival collapsed,
the balloons sagged,
colors faded to black-and-white,
the organ-grinder fled.

Weeks passed
and the rides rusted,
the mustard went bland.

Now hollow as the ferris wheel,
sexless as the doll smiling
on the shooting gallery shelf

I feel nothing.

Here in the high grass
by the hooves of the dusty
    carousel stallions

I sit licking on wind
swirled around a stick.

Jean Morgan

INVOCATION

Snake in my cupped hands
Lady of the dark Labyrinth,
whose fangs are ice.
You flood the hollow pipes
to lisp under my room.
You cause the greening
of bronze into the warm fur.
Shape Changer;
Hatch the back of my tongue
against my throat.
Reign cool between,
as you did in the purple columned houses

I will lead your dance in the murals.

Valerie Horn

WHILE YOU WERE AWAY IN BOSTON

Outside
the rain whispers intimately
against the window
Inside
the bed waits expectantly
to be played upon by its
present occupant.
there will be no sweet music
played tonight
there will be no passion
no voices of love
no voices...
Outside
the discreet love affair continues
--even in public it remains private
Inside
the music--man--occupant
has taken a short leave of absence
so there will be no sweet music
played tonight.
the bed waits expectantly.
no voices...still

the rain whispers intimately
against the window.

Peggy Burress

WORD GAMES

We sat high upon a cliff by the edge of the sea and spoke sporadically in muted monotone voices about passions and tempers that had flared between us in the past. Now he was staring intently at an aged maritime ship as it was being loaded in the quay below. The sea rollicked in frothy waves, spraying the sides of the ship with brine as if attempting to lure it away from the land. Dissonant sounds of seagulls shrieking and sailors bellowing reverberated off the walls of the cliffs. A warm breeze swept around us, ruffling our clothes and fluttering our hair.

The colour in Brian's eyes was the same penatrating shade of blue as the colour in the waves of the sea. Only there was no frivolity in his hard fixed gaze. If his eyes ahd not been so troubled his face would have seemed mellow and perhaps even a bit callow. I was pleased to see him look so distraught. I knew he was thinking about me and how I had changed his life.

Suddenly he sighed and began to speak rather abruptly. "And you know, it seems..."

And I distinctly remember how queer it was that he should have started his sentence with the word 'and', as if he expected me to remember the last thing he had said or to be able to read his mind. I lingered upon that thought briefly, almost not catching the rest of the words he uttered.

"It seems like it never really happened at all," he was saying. Then he paused and continued in a harsher, more determined voice. "Granted it did. I know it did. Why, I lived through it." Thinking that I was disconcerted by his rash change in tone, he stopped, turned to me, smiled delicately, and lowered his voice. "I think I just don't want to accept it. I don't want to seem melodramatic or anything even a token brazen but somehow I just can't seem to grasp hold of anything...well, solid."

"There's nothing left," I interrupted.

"Please stop saying that." thoroughly exasperated, he looked at me, his clear round eyes begging me for some response, for some show of emotion. Gently he took my hand and cradled it in his own. I remained cruelly calm.

"How can you be so damned placid?" he demanded, squeezing my fingers tightly. His eyes grew larger, bluer, and I felt as if any moment they would absorb me.

I pulled my hand away from him and looked out towards the sea. "It's simple," I answered him, "I divorced myself from the situation because there is no situation. There's only a shadow of a situation left. And why bother with a shadow? You yourself once called it a ghost. Don't you remember? No matter what you call it, it comes to the same thing: nothing. Nothing tangible anyway." I wasn't sure I knew what I was talking about but my words seemed to affect him and what I wanted most for him to be stirred and to keep on talking. I could listen to his ramblings forever. They mesmerized me in a romantic sort of way. I deesperately wanted the romance part of this thing. So I provoked him. Anyway, I thought I was provoking him.

"No," he began sadly, "I'm sorry, but I won't talk about t as if it were a shadow or a ghost. You're playing word gam That's all. I won't play anymore. Once everything was entir clear to me. Now it's all in a jumbled up mess. You wanted it be this way. You have a strange sort of power over me. Y thought I'd never admit it, I know. But it doesn't mat anymore. It's finished. It's time to say, 'See you next unive or whatever."

"How about, 'See you on the dark side of the moon'?' interjected. I thought that was a very witty thing to say. An my god, you had to be witty in your final scene. After all, i the witty lines they remember after you're gone. And I w going and going fast.

"The dark side of the moon is where they keep the lunatic he said.

"Is that any worse, than the next universe?" I asked, filli my voice with contempt.

"Goodbye, Jan." Those were the last words he ever said me. He got up and climbed down the craggy cliffs towards t beach.

"Hey!" I cried after him, "At least send some red roses to r hotel room or invite me to dinner! Maybe I'll accept!"

He never turned around but I knew he was crying becaus saw him raise his hands and wipe his eyes several times.

I was terribly tempted to chase after him but I could not him see the weakness he had created in me. I would wait f the roses he would send to my hotel room. After all, he wou send roses. He knew how I'd always wanted a man to send r roses. I could depend on those roses. He wouldn't let me dow about that.

While I was thinking all of this through, I watched h stagger away down the beach. He was walking close to the ed of the water, every now and then jumping away from it to avi getting caught by the rising tide.

The boat set out just then and I turned to watch it. Sea thir had always fascinated me and the bustle and excitement of t ship's departure captured all of my attention and curiosi Majestic seagulls swooped through the sky near the sh escorting it out to sea. Their beauty uplifted me and I f almost as if I were one of them, as if I too were winging fre through the blue sky.

I remembered Brian and turned my head just in time to s him absorbed into a hazy swirl of blues and browns far aw down the beach. I looked back towards the ship and saw slipover the horizon. The seagulls disappeared with it, leavi the entire beach deserted. An inexplicable lonliness set in rose and started back to the hotel.

There were no roses to greet me in my room. However, the was still plenty of time for them to arrive. It was only ea afternoon and my flight home did not leave until later th evening. Brian knew this. I had made sure to tell him all of t details.

packed my things and took a long hot shower. I thought I ght read for awhile but the moment I sat down on the bed all my strength seemed to drain out of me. I had no choice but submit to the drowsiness and close my eyes to sleep.

awoke with a start, now quite sure where I was. I was eved to recognize the familiar sterile surroundings of the el room. It was near dusk and the sun was sinking low in the outside the window. I rose, washed my face, dressed, and nt down to the lobby.

hat evening I ate dinner alone in the restaurant of the hotel. vas virtually empty. The waiter was polite and kept pouring wine from the bottle of Rose I had ordered for myself. After ner I was filled with a warm glow from the wine and I went to my room to see the roses. There were no roses. I called front desk to inquire after them. The man must have ught it a bit odd for me to ask for roses. But the wine had oxicated me sufficiently enought not to let anything restrain .

called a local florist and ordered myself twelve long-mmed red roses. I waited for them with my bags in the by. They arrived and delighted me. There was no card, no antic little note, of course, but then I couldn't be expected think of everything. I carried the bouquet in my arms in the i all the way to the airport.

I arrived at the terminal just in time for my flight. The customs offical argued with me, telling me it was against regulations to allow flowers on overseas flights. "Sometimes flowers carry diseases," he said. However, I remained adamant and finally he let me take one rose aboard.

The plane took off and I fell asleep immediately fromt he influence of the wine. The booming voice of the captain, announcing that we were a half hour away from landing, woke, me. The rose lay wilted in the crumpled folds of my skirt. I looked around, my eyes darting from one passenger to the next. They all looked so comfortable, as if they belonged there. But I was in mid air without a clue as to why. I thought of Brian, took out a piece of paper and wrote him a letter. It read:

> Thank you, my dearest, for the twelve beautiful long-stemmed red roses. It was the most romantic thing in my life to receive them. Really, you shouldn't have but I know you couldn't help it.
>
> Yours, Jan

I enclosed the remains of the dead rose and sealed the envelope tightly. We landed on schedule and I mailed the letter from the airport. Then I phoned the folks to tell them I was home.

Karen Ora Shapiro

Shock of the Clock

There are places in time when the blood in your veins
Cannot run too quickly.
I go when my string is
Plucked.
There are places in time that have no mouth
Only ears.
To return to quiet, we are jumping
Jumping.

Cindy Toneman

all comes
to those who wait
sayeth the lord
sayeth the preacher
amen

all comes
from the first church
of day-care christ
to those
who save like
jesus -- trading stamps,
box-tops, and proof of
purchase seals
tmen wait
six-to-eight weeks for
deliverance
amen

sayeth the lord
sayeth the preacher
all comes to those
who wait
in the right

place

Miles Maguire

A WORD

What is it
but a word
stolen into my dark hands
a word to tell you
to set you
peacefully in warm spring sun?

a spell at last undone
a thought of you
persistent as this wind

Rick Reynolds

A Letter About the Light-bill And Another Matter

Dear God,

Each month I write a check
for the board of Your stockholders at Washington Light.
I like how You zing through their wires I lease.
I pay to keep Your presence the way I pray--
feeling small and astounded, often late,
trying to be accurate and neat.
I hope You and the board can sense the ritual,
performed with Your fingertips instead of candles.

But who pays the dark-bill?
I don't mean to interfere in mysteries again
but we must somehow pay the other other half
If we default, please do not turn off the dark.
I need it. Ihereby countersign to pay the dark-bill.

Roderick Jellema

I Do not Think, Therefore

"I do not think, therefore I am a mustache."

John Paul Sartre, Nausea

It delights me, John Paul.
I do not see, therefore I am a marble,
a cat's eye,
a purple piece of twisted something
afloat in bubbled glass,
at the moment in Tommy Dolan's marble sack.
I'm his best shooter.

I do not hear, therefore I am an earring,
the long spangly kind,
I twist and jangle
[Aimez-vous le sons, John Paul]
on Carole's ear.
She is in love, John Paul,
and I am silver.

I do not speak, therefore I am toothpaste,
mint and white.
You wonder where the yellow went?
I know, John Paul, I know.
I know you see crabs on walls,
slimy crabs, sea-stinking.

John Paul, I think I am not a mustache.

Steve Govern

Todor Čalovski

SEEING STARS

I know
that there behind the last embers
where ashes suffer from vertigo
where all laws of duality are changed
where even the spaces between spaces are swept away
where controlled emptiness
is more dangerous than any imaginable depth,
there is a star,
which can do nothing but collide
with its own light at a shrieking speed
and thus will return the ornaments
from the poem to be by an unborn poet
since it cannot discard anything else.

translation by Milne Holton, Herbert Kuhner,
and Duško Tomovski

Todor Čalovski

WAY IN

You came here to enter completely
But there is always left behind you
Something greater than your dream
You have no time to think of trivialities
for you live in a time that understands you alone
You cannot answer for what pursues you
for you conquer here penetrated on all sides
Youdon't differentiate the horse's dream from that of the horseman
You could come in without anyone seeing you
be free as long as I don't possess you
For only so is the flight prolonged
For only so does the world go on.

translation by Graham W. Reid

Do not tell me
how you can't go on
how nothing is left
but our obsession
with earthworms
who live like kings
in their tombs.

Now you say
all is too casual.
The cloud takes the light
and it does not surprise you.
Everything is a part of this death.
The sun, the eye, the leaves, the wings
the slope deranged
And you can't bear to see it.

But what of the trees
Will you make no mention of them?
You of all should admire their patience.
Look, the whole tribe gone before winter
and still beyond the ground.
Listen, each in turn forgets the lower branches
but such breaking is not without sound.

You say
you have heard it
like the creaking of many doors.
I tell you
this weakness you live through
is already over,
the wind is pushing away in
and will be good
to carry the dead parts away.

Judith Harris

The sun is my ointment; I will not burn.
It makes me lie down on beach towels
While I tan beside the wavy water.
It even revives my sensuality. It makes me wear
Bathing suits for a commercial's sake.
Yes, though I walk on beaches, shadowed
By clouds, I do not feel bored, because the women
Are with me. Their breasts, busting gaily
Out from scanty bras amuse me.
They erect me a bed in the presence of my
Parents. They rub me down with Ben-Gay!
I drink lots of beer.
Certainly all manner of bugs will persue me
Every night of my youth; and I will dwell
In the midst of mosquito netting always.

Martin Goodman

This Too Too Salad Flesh

The front wheel of the bike wobbles
then the back slides from underneath me
and I skid across the oil slick pavement
into a MacDonald's parking lot, shred myself in a window
and plop on a dime in the open cash register.
My neighbor's kid, Buster, sees that it is me
runs outside and gathers all the bones, teeth,
flesh and loose change he can find,
puts the vitals in my helmet, sells the bike for junk
and carries me home to my girlfriend who screams
at Buster to find the carton of milk I had gone for.
She carries me into the kitchen and takes several glasses
out of the cabinet, fills each with water and drops all of me in.
After seven years of careful clipping and double crossing I
recover enough shape and nerve to open my eyes, kiss her,
wait in line, drive a car, hang around bars.
One day in bed she touches my hand and my tap root
shivers like timber falling up,
her eyes become curious flashlights in a haunted house
she says nod your head yes if you dream?
I smile distantly like the man on the moon then yell
I don't love you or your serene arcadian vision, and why
don't you have milk delivered? You have brainwashed me with
drips of water, sermons of acid **pantheism** and--where are my
balls?
If the Supreme Court will accept the testimony of plants then
I'll
divorce you to save my life. Your houseplants think you are a
monster
to have imprisioned me and have created my defense fund.
Her eyes flash, flooding with anger
this is my **scene** and you're my prop she says
smashing a bottle across my brow:
life thinks of leaving me, hesitates pacing at the door
then runs determined as a launched ship
faster and faster down the runway
until the image of itself is shattered
and replaced by shadow.

Tom Luminello

Idle Thoughts

they float up gently
each a balloon
softly bobbing
holding its breath

like dogs
tentatively, they touch noses
trail casually as tails
into question marks

they are loose and unbuttoned
as old friends
who linger over coffee
silent, each knows the other's story

Lynn A. Miller

The Doppler Effect

I cannot feel another's thoughts,
unless they're dopplered
down
away from blue
from green
from yellow,
down
to deeper,
weaker lambdas.

I only feel the longer wavelengths of emotion;
deep in the red,
where warmth leaks out of radiation,
6220 Angstroms,
or so,
and more.

I see only what rushes
away.

Bruce Gewirz

Sibelius at Half-Court

I have bought old Jan's Swan of Tuonela
just to make her croon her song to me.
But I must wait while I sit by a
vestal chanter or cheers who has my eye.

My nether half hankers to pound back prestissimo
in six-eight time the casual love-bumps
she gives me bounding from the bench.
Yet my top half is a frozen fjord.
Arms stiff, lungs clamped, hands cupped
to keep whole the thin disc flying from my lap.

At once my eyes line up
together the dear wafer,
the curve of my soaring madonna's
sweet round ass in blue tights,
and at the climax of her leap,
above her head, the basket-hoop
all shining orange halo.

The virgin is down now:
dunked in a black wax pool.
The vision [damn it] stays.
The swan knows why,
and she is floating in black rings
that need only my spindle in their center hole
to make her sing.

Here in the night,
I slip my steel-tipped stylus in the moving grooves
and flap my arms to lead Jan's muted violins.
The great Swan's cry goes tooting on an English horn.

G. A. Cate

Patroclus

I was not a myrmidon.
In the marching and attaining
there were other things for me.
The darkness of the skin beneath a sleeve
meant more than its efficiency.
I heard the horses sing
and saw the grass take hold
upon the sand we crossed.

He unfolds me the way they set a tent
beside the water,
I am coolness against his flesh,
softness where he cannot be soft.

When he draws me to him I am afraid.

Ruthellen Quillen

Zhivago

The walls of his heart were like paper
written on at different slants
in a dozen different ways
crumpled and abandoned
smoothed and put away.
His cuffs were frayed and his heels broken
like any poor man on a bus.

What was it in the confines of the city street which broke him?
and brought him to his feet?

The bleach smell caught up in the yoke of a shirt
her hand sprinkling rain water on the wash
the thump of the iron
and the hiss of it on the damp sheet

the horse rocking on floor boards forever frozen

the rider turning in circles in the road
unable to decide

The woman walking in the busy street
brushing the wall with her sleeve
does not quite turn her head when he dies.

Ruthellen Quillen

Keeper of the Night

Grandpa lived most of his life
Underground
Mining night out of earth
His shoulders must have known the feel
Of stone biting back

For forty years he linked his days
Like one-ton cars
Each following the other
The way he followed the beam of light
From his miner's cap

One day he rode up the shaft
For the last time
And came to live with us
Got a job at the Washington Zoo
Working the lion house

He fed them everyday at four
Came home & shovelled
Down dinner
Then went up to the Loop
Not coming back till late

Those nights before he stumbled
Up the stairs
And I heard the lions roar
I'd pull the covers tight over my head
Cause I knew grandpa wasn't there.

Saundra Maley

REQUIEM

It crept from under the floor
the night you swallowed your last lie
It sat beside me as I slept
peeled open my chest to blow wake music.

Upon rising
the only sound was the bed gasp
as I wrapped 'round my knees
and rocked
rocked
to be warm.

Kathy Anderson

NAMING MYSELF FOR YOU

Alma Serena,
made of Norweigan bone
brittle as fingers
that work needles and cloth
those quilts you made
are spread over your knees
all the way
across Nebraska.

All those miles
you worked your hands
like wagon wheels
turning over patches of
dust and stone,
never stopping
not even for Apache
that screamed past your eyes,
red as fire.

When it was done
you threw your head back
and wanted to scream
with relief
but instead,
you let your hair out
blonde as wheat
let it rise and billow,
let it ride long behind you.

Serena Karandy

THE SELF FOR WHAT IT IS

There is a constant searching of pockets and old books.
The contents have been spread on the table, and the self
picks among the cellophane wings, several timely mirrors,
and odd buttons of self-denial. She doesn't recall where
or when they were fashioned or found, or listen to their
importunate tinkles, clicks and flaps. She judges them not,
but makes as if idly some other thing:

For so many years in love with itself, the path has
doubled back through the neck or foothold of the forest.
The past resurfaces under constant shuffling, but could
not have been predicted. "What a mess," it says, and
"How could you?" The self for what it is, and without
breaking surface tension, balances the mirror on water.
It floats away

reflecting the unevenly ordered path of geese unzipping
the sky at intervals. In their wake, the sky opens,
the geese cry "gap gap" and the self, for what it is,
flings the buttons, whereupon there is closing. Little
more remains to be said. The self uses the cellophane
wings, and the waterbourne looking glass looks.

Desirée Weidaw

GALLERY I

THE PRECIPITOUS SITUATION

The sound of frozen raindrops
pounding on my soul like a
frustrated musician on an
out of tune piano, like an
ancient chinese water torture
laughing at my helplessness and
reprimanding my melancholy
for not masquerading as
joy.

The silence that follows
the storm
saying, "Now that I've caged you,
I'll set you free."
But as you hold open
the cage door, you place
the hungry cat
just inches away. And as you
fake sorrow and tell me you've
lost the combination, I see you
turn slowly and
swallow the key.

Katherine Wolfe

I WAS MAKING DINNER

but I had to stop at the carrots,
they were so firm, defiant;
strong, straight and screaming,
"I am a carrot!
And to hell with the rest of you!"
Not like those apologies
I've seen before, reluctant
vegetables twisting away
from the pot.
These could dive from clouds,
kamakazi carrots to the end;
proud in their sacrifice,
ready to make you yearn for
one more bite of their offered flesh.
"Take me, I AM A CARROT!"
Tears came to my eyes as I
cut them into managable strips.

Annette Curtis

the after alls
and she thoughts
seemed to echo
something
she had once read
they really didn't
belong to her.
did they?

there must be some reason that
they kept cropping up.
even the seems were thought
by her to mean something
after all.

after all what?
the seem ran down the poems
like the back of old
stockings--it had its place.

was it only the fear of
putting it on the line?
the seem must be her hedge--

she felt hemmed in by
the border she had
defined: the pattern
of how to.

she wondered where the i had gone.
crooked and snagged
she reread all the what was knowns
and thoughts and what seemed to be
at a certain point...

she didn't have a leg to stand on.

Amy Robinson

Instructions:

to know if the room is dark
close the door

if it is windowless
& not dark
assume you are the source of light

if it is dark
assume it is dark
or that you are dead

if you assume you are dead
you probably are

if you are immortal go on to the next page.

Diana Vance

O Lord

Deliver me
from those with good minds
& bad intent

make me humble enough
to hear
what isn't said.

For the dark
give me:
candle streetlamp star.

Tonight
I watch the roses sway
to the rhythem of the rain

at least I'm learning to keep time
--in the beginning I was wherever I ended.

Diana Vance

HAVE YOUR TICKETS? VERY WELL THEN.
RELAX, TAKE IT SLOW,
AND YOU WILL BE TOLD
HOW TO GET OFF

This: written by someone outside
your surface tension. If you wish
to know the name, pop.

1. The Biggest Thing Wrong With Language

We don't hear the words of the river.
We don't see the words of ripples
sunshined on the talkative stream.
And the birds?
They inject-
like your head being oiled by an oilcan,
the membrane bottom dully pushed in
for each note sung-
receive the oil, tweet tweet tweet!

How harmful
how
we stay tuned into only ourselves
like a radio stuck on a station.
There is an entire frequency to be
rather than a dot on it-
the space of your brain meat.

A delicately sculptured tree,
just barely bare of its leaves
will show you-
form and idea are one.

There is no room
for wind in the woods
until you come there
and create the space.
There is no space without human brain.
The organic obvious is wonderful
if you can find it
the world is the metaphor of the mind.

We clothe our basic nudeness
exactly as we conceive our minds.

3. The Room

The room is not around
your legs, as it seems, is it?
The room is not around
your arms.
The room is not
around your trunk or chest, either,
the room is around your eyes,
the room is
into your ears.

How largely you conceive the olive shapped pools
on either side of your nose,
to the point of falling in.
Sight is as the cross-sections of arteries.
This is obvious
like the Purloined Letter-
you look into your mind
but the image is ego-switched out.

Ahem! The voice of the turtle-
"Can you laugh at a turtle
when your skull is your shell
wherever you go
your perception is held
in bone?"
The children play right past you.
You glance at them shortly,
trying to catch their balloons.

4. Like A Whirlpool Going Away

The out of a whirlpool
is the conceived, the senses.
The in of a whirlpool is
...nothing...but
when the whirlpool goes away
nothing becomes the ocean:
this is known as the gentle plop.

What makes up a rock
makes up your mind
call them atoms if you wish
the world is completely consciousness.
We are conceiving creatures,
being conceived,
who conceive there is nothing
beyond conception.
The face of god is dipped in your mind
but you behave like Frankenstein.

What we are is shining awareness

2. The Electron In The Solid Block Of Steel Wants to Know What Movement Is

What we see all day is
different ways to see the sun.
We, on our planet,
are in the sun's path
completely covered with light going on
unaware of us to be itself.
The earth is a particle of the sun
for the sun is where it stretches,
the sun is where it shines,
the sun is wherever it is-
the earth is a particle of the sun
So rejoice!
For the mind is also where it stretches,
the mind is also where it shines,
the mind is also wherever it is.
This is all the brilliance of the sun,
the cream of the moon-
shining awareness.
The mind is the man in the crow's nest,
his feet are propellers deep in the ocean,
deep beneath the surface of the seen--
wiggle your toes.
Your legs, as you look at them
surface reflections of the deep structure.
Dance, for it is a mental massage-
I am as moving as the dancer
but I am also moving as the river-
I am the perpetual
river rider,
I am moving as the sun,
holding as the sky.
Where will we be
when the dreamer of like
wakes up?
Those who see trees as being blind
reflect the inability to see trees-
Something inconceivable is conceiving
me-
Those who cannot fathom the mystery
of other people, cannot comprehend
that they are
other people.

5. Coming To Terms With Brilliance

What we are is shining awareness.
The leaf blowing in the wind
is slave and free to the wind at once;
plus the wind is also slave and free
to its own direction-
direction; which is not.
Those who are selfish
and know what the self is
are the most unselfish of all.
We are lit-up creatures
shining in awareness
even as we are.
In coming to terms with brilliance
I am brilliant, I am brillance-
I hold the conceptual catcher's mitt.
Ego is private brilliance,
love between two
is also private brilliance.
The sun itself is private brilliance.
The religion is this:
I am brilliance
worshipping brilliance.

The mind, like the smell of a skunk,
mists outward in cold, sensual perception.
But, all is quiet outside the shell.
Always my mind is in my head,
yet always my mind
is
where I am
something isn't moving...

EPILOGUE

I took a chunk of glass I found
and held it over my pupil, at the sun.
"You have held the sun," I told the glass,
then tossed it, and my mind, away.

Charles Lindbergh's greatest friend
was a fly that stayed in the plane
as they flew out over the ocean---
for the experience became the flys
with Lindbergh as an other-
and the trip took care of itself.

Poem on his Birthday

A wife, a house, a jaw in a brawl
went 1-2-3. You couldn't eat or yell.
Always pursued
you pull your beat-up Chrysler off the highway
into the entrance of Gate-of-Heaven Cemetary.
You can't make it home tonight,
bleary eyed on valium and whisky.
Driving a blind rage to a temporary standstill.

They're retiring you from the Force.
You've bought a gun to blow a few people away,
You've already danced with it in your mouth,
Your body nods forward,
you burp
fuck it,
fuck it,
and dream

you're wandering thru the low blue lights of the cemetary
fog rolling in
you haul yourself out and wake
shivering like a baby.

Bill Griffiths

Late Night Beefheart

A microdot stirs some thought of an unknown plot
as the beat of the moon fades behind the dawn
and through the golden arches til the sun goes
down on the head of an upstairs maid who glides
through the wall of an automobile and into the
backseat of matrimony, way back when a smile
meant something and jesus was a short order cook.
And I remembered to forget the things I never
knew as the hole in my head, which was heaven
sent, spit out the theme of a story I never
read. The eyes of a whore blinked a plastic
sigh as a lingering lust squirted out of my
ear, just below the equator of my polar region,
and sunk through the rug as the planets crashed.
Anticlimaticaly the delivery girl with an
overinflated backlog of hulabaloo dance steps
bugalooed her bipedal extremities down the ramp
of an abandoned stew bum and excitedly invented
a new dance craze
By then I knew it was time.

Michael J.

STITCHES

I touch backwards:
Weave my body
under the jitter-
bug of our arms,
the first cable.
As I hold loosely
a rack of coats,
you catch me,
tighten my drunken
curves. My capture
of your tongue
stitches our lips
knot-tight.
Unraveling we
let go only to
repeat ourselves.
I sit here
knitting a scarf
for you.

Terry Fleishman

SONNET

There is a place every day where I am lost to trees.
It is a bend in the forest road I walk to work.
Turning into it, I disappear for anyone looking
after me from behind, and I am not yet visible for
any eyes searching from the houses ahead. It is like
a mind asleep in its own time. It is like entering
a dream that will be forgotten by morning.

I leave for work before you wake and I come home
after you have gone to bed. This week, I have only
seen you sleeping, lost in two kinds of darkness.
1] In the quiet, I hear you taste something. Honey,
2] I part your breasts wide like a sea. I lay my
head and listen down to where your dreams blow in a,
shell.

The wind, naked, running from the enemy down a steep
hill. In front of her, a field
of barbed-wire
fences like a sheet of green music dreamed by
a dying astronaut who has spent his life plotting new
constellations. Her skin si gs and lists and she
is running thru the barbed-wrie, her running flows
like a stream of white hands. There is the pluck of
barbs thru her skin, the sound of harps shimmering
downover her and the silence just before applause.

Patrick McGrath

a philosophical discussion of the universe in four parts

1

I have a sore throat
and my cat is bugging me
because she's old
and about to die.

2

I am considering chanting
nam myoho renge kyo
keeping in mind the things I want,
and that life is a condition
of lillies blooming in mud.

3

the universe is 1 trillion suns
in 1 trillion galaxies
kind of like ours
except not really
or at least
we don't know much
about them
and of our own sun
we know maybe a hundredth
of what there is to know

if we could really get that
our minds would overload;
smoke would rise,
there'd be a hissing sound.

4

There is a comet
in the morning sky
but it's too cloudy to see.
I let my cat out
and curse her
for waking me.

Judy Kastner

THE PAIN OF IT ALL

I dreamed a dream the night before last. I dreamed I was in a corridor crowded with people. The people were naked, their bodies were covered with sores and gaping wounds. They hurried by me on all sides, never once speaking. Their unblinking eyes were fixed straight ahead. They seemed oblivious to their condition.

Some of the wounds were infected and oozed a thick yellowish substance which stank of decay. Some were obviously fresh, still draining blood. The skin surrounding the wounds was dyed a cooper color from successive layers of smeared blood. I was surprised some of these people could still walk . . .wheir wounds were so bad. Yet they acted as though nothing were wrong. The floor of the hallway was slippery with blood, but no one else seemed to notice.

I woke with this scene still vivid in my mind. I was convinced that what I had seen was somehow true, but was confused as to what it might mean. The dream showed me a reality I had never before imagined. I thought perhaps it was a sign, that I was to be the one to help these people, to touch them and to cause their wounds to heal.

I started to rise from bed and found that I couldn't. Something was wrong. The right side of my chest felt cold and numb. I raised my head and tried to see what was the matter. On my right side it looked as though the chest ended about two inches below the nipple. The skin and muscle had been violently torn. A cresent of mutilated flesh ran from just below the armpit, curved towards the solar plexus, then back down to the right hipbone. It appeared as though my side had been ripped open with a sickle. It was bloody, bruised and repulsive . . .not at all like the me I'd put to bed a mere six hours ago.

By straining my neck I could see the shiny grey of intestines that had squeezed out from beneath the ribs. I could see a blackish thing I took to be my liver. Across that dark blob a thin blue vein made a crooked line, then branched out small. The vein pulsed rapidly, quivering almost, as though frightened by its exposure to light.

Pitying myself, I laid and stared at the ceiling for an hour or so. I came to the realization that self-pity was not only useless, but worse, it was boring. I struggled out of bed. It wasn't easy. The bedsheet was saturated with blood and stuck to my back. A loop of intestine hung down nearly to my thigh. I touched it. It was warm and slippery. I put myself together as best I could and wrapped the bedsheet tightly around my body.

I felt sick and faint, but I figured if nothing extraordinary happened I'd get by o.k. It was 8:30, if I hurried I could still make it to work on time. I dressed, then looked in the mirror to make sure I was still alive. In spite of the clothes, in spite of the bedsheet, I still felt naked. I wore no jacket and the sheet made an unseemly bulk under my shirt. I just hoped no one would look at me today.

When I got on the bus the only seats left were those in back where three or four people sit abreast. The guy on one side of me was reading the morning paper, the guy on the other side was reading a Philip Roth novel, so I sat and pretended to play with my watch until it was time to get off. I must of still been bleeding some because red had started to seep through my shirt. When I stood up to leave, I left a wet spot on the back of the seat, but I don't think anyone else saw it.

From the bus stop it is only about a block and a half to the building where I work. I walked, bent over to the side, with my hand pressed against the wound. I was ten minutes late. I snuck in the back door and went straight to my office so I wouldn't be seen.

Once inside, I shut the door and collapsed into my chair. I felt very weak. Then I saw the splotches of blood on the floor. Most likely there were drops of blood trailing the whole length of the hallway. It would be only a matter of time before someone would come asking questions.

I waited. To avoid thinking about that I might say, I started writing some letters . . .one to the home office and then one to a friend in Kansas. I finished the letters without being disturbed. I couldn't understand why no one had come. Not that I was anxious . . .but still, it made me wonder. I'll bet if a guy was dying of a heart attack in the hallway those idiots I work with would probably leave him on the floor for the cleaning woman to carry out with the rest of the trash.

For lunch I stayed in the office and ate the bologna sandwich I'd brought from home. In the afternoon the girl with the nice ass,who's in charge of the coffee pot, came around for her weekly collection. I was sure she's notice blood on my shirt. It was awfully conspicuous. I prepared myself for exclamations of concern. I even pushed back my chair so she could see better.

She just stood there with one hand on her hip, watching me, waiting for me to get out the money. Finally I asked her outright if she noticed anything wrong with me. She gave some smart answer and stood looking superior. I felt her eyes were laughing at me, it was as if she knew, but wasn't about to acknowledge it. The thought crossed my mind that maybe she had been menstruating the whole day. I was glad when she left. That look she had given . . .it scared the hell out of me.

When I got home this evening, the first thing I did was to unwind the bedsheet and look at my wound again. The bleeding had stopped but the skin around it was all red and puffy, it was not a pleasant sight. I probed lightly around the damaged area and noted its reactions to the heat of my fingertips. Then I got a bottle of scotch from the cabinet and sat down to try and figure things out. I was scared to go to sleep. I felt I might never wake up.

It's nearly dawn now and I still haven't slept. I keep looking at my side and thinking I should take some aspirin, but the wound doesn't hurt me in the least. It just feels numb. I don't know what's going to happen. I wonder what I should do if no one notices today.

Timothy Neeley

Earthworm

Their nightmares are
the smell of up-turned soil,
the crack and snap of broken roots.
They squirm in their beds
and scream the absence of darkness,

then plunge back into
the spongy blackness
and, without eyes,
try to thread the earth back together.

Patrice M. Wilson

Boundaries

Four girls playing in my back yard,
I, my sisters,
the girl next door--
three brown, one blond.

My back yard, longer than wide,
cut in two
by cracked cement slabs
in a crooked line,
grass growing between the slabs.

Four girls playing a special tag
[they made it up]--
two on one side
two on the other--
they call this game "Property"--
No trespassing.

Next door, land spreads on,
makes two yards,
longer than wide,
cut in half
by the harsh voice
of the blond girl's father--
a line as straight
as a strand of her yellow hair,
and just as thin.

Patrice M. Wilson

DOGS IN MOONLIGHT

mud pattering to silence the wind
ashroad/blackfield/greynight
solitude is a song of the country
walking
back from the tavern
two farmers in

anticipation
of the night of animal sounds
of the rhythm of the secret of their lust one stum-
bles touch of eye to hand graspedbackstretchinglimbs
gaspsgleaming to sky
cold disgust

still
fear
dogs in moonlight

Ricky Rankin

Chill Beauty

a dog lies half-twisted
his chin on the road in a false frozen fall,
the dazed blood an afterthought.
two days later his sleeping puppy look
will be gone. The flies cloud blue and green already.

Contortion is his only trick,
necks crane
eyes grope at hime
as they fly by
fascinated
with the casual sprawl at the side of the road.
Their eyes reflect speed like rear view mirrors;
low beam brains not seeing quite in time

though it is permissible
to marvel at the brittle silver crystal
of ice storms
hanging, dragging trees, grass
into broken, glittering deaths,
the brake must be applied
somewhere.

Barbara Chadwick

GALLERY II

-for Perrin

I know what has been written. How in all this [The lovers leaving], time
did not change, and the memory became
like a tumor in the brain, waiting,
benign.

If I say this, it will not be true.
I remember your face in hazes. After
these years, I am afraid I would not
recognize you in a crowd.
There have been other women,
and I cannot say I am unmoved.

I remember your profile against light.
Winter in the mountains when the sun
holds the weather
in warm pockets of the day.
The stray light through the trees
turned your green face
like a spring leaf.

Jim Beall

Concepts and Images

I have only
seen a crab
move easily
in both directions

and even he
has pinchers
only on one
end.

Ann Cavanaugh

Candy Hart

Sun in the winter
the Mexico mountain air
  and your heart-shaped
  sailor tattoo
  mother on his arm
  as you approached
  he popped the candy
  to his mouth you
  salivate and he
    is sneering
    causes you to jump
you thrown by
  the wave that curls his lip
  over the back breakers
  of the ship's last wake
    then silence
    then the sharks
      the candy wrapper floating
      on fluorescent seas.

Jim Beall

Looking back

I remember her
surrounded by
milk glass bluebirds
china roses
and yarn scarecrows.
Who like velvet
in turquoise and red.
Love notes on florist cards
tucked between
peppermint carnation stems
made her smile--
and say "you shouldn't have."
She never braided my hair
when I was small
but I remember crying
as she brushed out
the tangles.

Susan Hall

SPREADING

spreading like vapor over the east coast,
my vision escapes the net of nerves
behind my eyes and floats away
    over the tidal flats that slow throb
    with the beat of the moon
    over the pulsing waves that grind
    dirt down to diamond.

the vast eye-cloud sees how fast
I fade a sand grain
as earth rolls over like a head.
undulating and sea-like it darkens
the pupils of solar systems
    the dawn of time
    the death of time

shattered and burning
    the wide eye winces
from countless holes in black heavens.
it does not see me resign into the shell
of things like a snail. still
I keep two pinholes of sight
trained winter and summer
on maneuvers of my growing vision,
how it curves out toward forever,
time's spill spreading.

Jack Greer

To Michael

Did you ever
wonder why
a tree
grows up
away
from its roots?

And blossoms
and bears the fullest fruit
only on the farthest branch?

Judy Marx

Seven Handed Poker

I have known one jack
to beat three kings
when he had only
the king's three queens

Now isn't that a dainty dish...

John Howard

little electra

in my dream, oh in my dream
running, running from mr. clean
without my shirt, perhaps no pants

asking if i were ready or not
but no, no, no, as i run away
no, no,no, it is no i say
running, running.....

my dream procedes to the evening time
my cooling bath, my mr. clean!
standing beside me in vague undress
asks of my unreadiness--yes, yes, yes
expectantly simple
i sadly sigh.
bright as lightening across the night sky
swift and prompt his scimitar flies
and severs my thighs.....

oh dream, oh dream, what can you mean?
oh horrible, wonderful mr. clean!!!

John Howard

Thornrose

It is not death
but sleep in the tower
that pulls your taper
up the winding stairs
to crack the door
where the woman sits
and spins her wheel in the
ragged dusk
and when you fall
sleeping on me caught
by the queen and
horse and dog and
king and queen
remember themselves
in a dream of thorns
know that a man
turns thorns into roses
to pace the halls to the
tower stairs
and kiss your lips
in the castle of the
morning
until even the fly that
hangs frozen on the
wall will gather his wings
and live again.

David Hickman

Wading

Ankle deep
in the moonlight
you are the part
of me
farther in.

What orbits have
we broken to circle
here
What lessons can we
take from the
tide?

Is gravity nothing
but this gown of
flesh that pulls
us down from the edge
of the sea and teaches
our feet to kick
and sing for air?

No. The willows may weep
but the planets hold.
Venus gambles with our
bodies and our voices.
We must live to learn
how to love.

David Hickman

Dreams of Trains

I

The rails shiver
under my heels
and shake my spine
until my hair lifts at the neck.
We are face to face.
Steel pierces the air between us.
My mouth reaches into my body,
but the cry is the train.

I push
at the air at my side.
It pushes back.
I fall,
slow,
only as it falls.

the train
takes the place where I was
and leaves me.

II

The train rushes at me.
Each shudder,
from the tracks,
from me,
forces my knees down
and beats out the words,
"The train is a dream."

I draw
the throb into my eyes
and glare into the dark windows.
They float me.
I tumble in the air.

III

My nerves are wheels
that spin and turn.
The rails push.
I pull
to the top of the mountain,
look down at the valley.
Look down.

I fly into the grass
while each blade touches me
and seems to whisper
"Live in it, live in it,
and the birds lift their wings
to let the air snatch them
from my back,
as I give them their flight
as they try to follow me
I am too fast for them
as I race to the next mountain.

Joyce Merritt

Rimbaud's Last Words

I have not much time, I have come
with the mark of iron hooves on my chest
when I go it will not be to sleep

Yes I itched too I rubbed
against the tree sighed
and the worm tapped into my spine

Now as my brain drains dry the crust
peels back from the moist quivering bud
and the rain lashes washes

And this is only justice
burning as her dancing belly rubbed me
beaking over the same sins

insects armpits children mildew
Now the angels in the tree prowl
like jackals on cloud of fungus

And I have lost the power of speech
mumble like a eunuch urinating I wait
for the cackle of mad spring I see

an angel's head dancing on the quicksand
metal cures it is saying

Bill Lloyd